

Children & Young People Select Committee

A meeting of Children & Young People Select Committee was held on Wednesday, 23rd January, 2019.

Present: Cllr Carol Clark(Chairman), Cllr Barbara Inman(Vice-Chairman), Cllr Evaline Cunningham, Cllr Elsi Hampton, Cllr Di Hewitt, Cllr Paul Rowling, Cllr Mrs Sylvia Walmsley, Cllr Sally Ann Watson,

Officers: Martin Gray (CS), Peter Mennear, Marianne Sleeman (DCE)

Also in attendance:

Apologies:

**CYP
55/18 Evacuation Procedure**

The Evacuation Procedures were noted.

**CYP
56/18 Declarations of Interest**

There were no interests declared.

**CYP
57/18 Minutes of the meeting held 24th October and 14th November 2018**

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 24th October and 14th November 2018.

AGREED

That the minutes from the meeting held on 24th October and 14th November 2018 were declared as an accurate recording and signed by the Chair.

**CYP
58/18 Scrutiny Review of the Child's Journey**

Consideration was given to the Scrutiny Review of the Child's Journey draft final report and recommendations.

AGREED:

That the Scrutiny Review of the Child's Journey draft final report be approved for submission to Cabinet in February 2019.

**CYP
59/18 Care Leavers Reporting-In Review**

Members received information regarding Care Leavers Reporting-In Review from the Director of Children's Services which included:

- The Care Leavers Local Offer continued to be a working progress whilst ongoing work was carried out with Care Leavers. The full Local Offer would be published by April 2019. The Offer would continue to evolve and develop.

- Strenuous efforts were made to offer services to Care Leavers who do not actively engage with Professionals. Members requested details of the number of care leavers who did not remain in contact with the Council, and where possible, the type of care they received during their time in our care.

AGREED:

- 1) That the Reporting-in Review of the Care Leavers be noted and the Committee's comments be submitted to Cabinet with the report in February 2019;
- 2) The information requested be provided.

**CYP
60/18**

Children In Need Reporting In Review

Members received information regarding Children In Need Reporting In Review from the Director of Children's Services. The key aim for this work was to safely reduce the volume of work surrounding children in need, including the development of alternative approaches. An update was provided on work since the last report which included:

- There was a continuing focus on ensuring children assessed as being in need were supported through Early Help where possible to prevent escalation.
- The attitude to risk management differs throughout partner services.
- Cases would continue to be audited to ensure assessment of their quality was adequate.
- Focusing on better ways to support families, Family Group Conferences were working well reducing the involvement of Social Workers with families. The role of Family workers may be redefined.
- The Signs of Safety approach had proven successful and would continue.

Members requested the number of cases that had been escalated.

Points of discussion included:

- Would the recruitment of more Family Workers be required and what training would be offered. Some more staff may be required or it may be a case of reallocating roles. There was currently no career structure and progression currently for Family Workers; a possible review of qualifications and roles could be considered.
- Members endorsed the approach to reducing referrals and closing cases where possible, but would requested ongoing assurance that the level of risk within this approach is being managed appropriately. It was agreed this would need to be kept under constant review due to the differing needs of children and the factors that may lead to the escalation or de-escalation of the response to their situation.

- Members agreed Family Group Conferences were a valuable service that could prevent escalation from Child in Need to Child Protection.
- A revolving programme of training around thresholds and risks was offered through the Safeguarding Board for with agencies.

Members placed on record their appreciation for the work of the social work teams that undertook this difficult work.

AGREED:

- 1) That the Reporting-in Review of Children in Need be noted and the Committee's comments be submitted to Cabinet with the report in February 2019;
- 2) The information requested be provided.

CYP 61/18 Children's Services Quarterly Performance Report

Members received information regarding Children Services Quarterly Performance Report from the Director of Children's Services.

Points of discussion included:

- Children in the Local Authority's Care feel genuinely loved.
- Clarification around suitable accommodation for Care Leavers was given to Members.
- Recruitment and retention of Social Workers. It was noted that there Most social workers did not leave to undertake a similar role elsewhere. It was noted that caseloads were currently at an average of 17 per social worker, and this was considered to be manageable. A points system that looked at the details of each case was also used to allocate cases.
- Agreements and new schemes developed with Universities in order to 'grow our own' Social Workers.

AGREED:

That the information be noted.

CYP 62/18 Committee Work Programme

Consideration was given to the Work Programme.

Members noted that topics for the Committee work programme in 2019-20 were being sought. A topic looking at Domestic Violence was discussed and supported by the Committee.

AGREED

That 1) the Work Programme be noted.

- 2) The Committee meeting scheduled for February 2019 be stood down.
- 3) The work programme suggestion be submitted.

**CYP
63/18**

Chair's Update

The chair had nothing further to update